

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

Sub
all

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- 1 1. A method of providing a program L time units in length
2 to a user, comprising the steps of:
3 storing a first segment of said program;
4 beginning the presentation of the stored first
5 segment of said program to the user;
6 receiving a second segment of said program at
7 least L time units after beginning to store the first
8 segment of said program; and
9 presenting to the user the second segment of said
10 program when the presentation of the first segment of said
11 program is completed.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps
2 of:
3 storing program data included in the second
4 segment of said program while presenting at least a portion
5 of the first segment of said program to the user.
- 1 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising the steps
2 of:
3 receiving program guide information; and
4 identifying, from the received program guide
5 information, a broadcast channel upon which the second
6 segment of said program is being broadcast.
- 1 4. The method of claim 3,
2 wherein the first segment of said program is an
3 initial program segment;

4 including the step of storing at least Y time units of
5 video data, where $L > C > Y$.

1 9. The method of claim 6, wherein the method further
2 comprises the step of:

3 broadcasting the first segment of said program
4 which is stored, on a first communications channel, prior
5 to performing the storing step; and

6 broadcasting the second segment of said program
7 which is presented to the user on a second communications
8 channel prior to performing the receiving step.

1 10. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of storing
2 program data corresponding to the second segment of said
3 program includes the step of storing program data in a
4 portion of a cache which is operated as a first-in, first-
5 out data structure.

1 11. The method of claim 10, wherein the step of:

2 beginning the presentation of the stored first
3 segment of said program to the user includes the steps of:

4 performing at least one of a descrambling
5 operation and a decrypting operation on at least some data
6 included in the first segment of said program; and

7 outputting video data generated as a function of
8 performing at least one of said descrambling operation and
9 decrypting operation to a presentation device.

1 12. A method of providing a program to a user, comprising
2 the steps of:

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receiving on a first communications channel, a first program segment;
storing the first segment of said program in a storage device;
receiving a second program segment on a second communications channel, the first and second program segments corresponding to the same program; and
presenting to the user the second segment of said program immediately following the presentation of the first segment of said program.

13. The method of claim 12,
wherein the first and second communications channels are different physical communication channels with different carrier frequencies.

14. The method of claim 12,
wherein the first and second communications channels are different logical communication channels implemented using the same physical communications channel.

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15. The method of claim 12,
wherein said program is a user selected program;
and
wherein the first segment of said program is one of a first plurality of program segments transmitted on the first communications channel, the method further comprising the step of:
storing, in the storage device, additional program segments included in the first plurality of program segments; and

1 19. The method of claim 17,
2 wherein the first program segment is a regional
3 news segment, the second program segment is a non-regional
4 news segment, and the first additional program segment is a
5 regional news segment.



1 20. The method of claim 12, wherein the second program
2 segment is presented to the user without being stored in
3 said storage device.

1 21. The method of claim 12, wherein the first program
2 segment is a regional news segment, and the second program
3 segment is a non-regional news segment.

1 22. The method of claim 12,
2 wherein the first segment of said program is an
3 initial portion of a movie; and
4 wherein the second segment of said program is a
5 main portion of said movie, the initial and main portions
6 of said movie forming a complete version of said movie.

1 23. The method of claim 12, wherein the second segment of
2 said program is a regional advertising segment.

1 24. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step
2 of:
3 beginning the presentation of the stored first
4 segment of said program to the user at or prior to
5 performing the step of receiving a second segment of said
6 program.

1 25. The method of claim 24, further comprising the step
2 of:
3 storing at least a portion of the second program
4 segment prior to presenting the second program segment to
5 the user.

1 26. The method of claim 25,
2 wherein the first segment of said program is an
3 initial portion of a movie; and
4 wherein the second segment of said program is a
5 main portion of said movie, the initial and main portions
6 of said movie forming a complete version of said movie.

1 27. A method of presenting a program to an individual,
2 comprising the steps of:
3 operating a user device to record a broadcast of
4 an initial portion of the program;
5 receiving information about the time and channel
6 upon which copies of the program are broadcast;
7 operating the user device to detect a request to
8 view said program;
9 in response to the request to view said program,
10 operating the user device to begin presenting the initial
11 portion of the program to the individual using the recorded
12 initial portion of the program; and
13 operating the user device to obtain the data
14 corresponding to a remaining portion of said program from
15 one of said broadcast copies of said program.

1 28. The method of claim 27, further comprising the step
2 of:
3 accessing said information about the time and
4 channel upon which copies of the program are broadcast; and
5 selecting one of the broadcast copies from which
6 to obtain the data corresponding to the remaining portion
7 of said program as a function of the accessed information.

1 37. The method of claim 33, wherein the regional program
2 segments are regional advertising segments and the non-
3 regional program segments are television program segments.

1 38. A user device for processing program data, comprising:
2 a receiver circuit for receiving broadcast
3 program data;
4 a program cache coupled to the receiver circuit;
5 means for identifying and storing in said program
6 cache initial portions of programs which are broadcast on a
7 periodic basis;
8 means for detecting user input requesting the
9 presentation one of the programs which are transmitted on a
10 periodic basis;
11 means for outputting a cached initial portion of
12 said user requested program in response to said user input
13 requesting the presentation of one of the programs; and
14 means for obtaining, from a periodic broadcast of
15 the user requested program which starts subsequent to
16 caching of the initial portion of said user requested
17 program, a remaining portion of said user requested
18 program; and
19 means for outputting the remaining portion of
20 said user requested program immediately following the
21 output of the cached initial portion.

1 39. The user device of claim 38, wherein the means for
2 obtaining, from a periodic broadcast of the user requested
3 program, a remaining portion of said user requested program
4 includes:
5 stored program guide information indicating the
6 channels on which said programs are transmitted on a
7 periodic basis and information on the time at which the
8 programs are broadcast.

1 43. The device of claim 42, further comprising:
2 means for accessing program information
3 indicating which program segments are included in said
4 program and the time at which at least one of the included
5 program segments will be broadcast.

1 44. The device of claim 42, wherein the program is a
2 movie, the first program segment is an initial portion of
3 the movie and second program segment is a main portion of
4 said movie.

1 45. The device of claim 43, wherein the program is a
2 regional news program, wherein the first program segment is
3 a regional news program segment; and wherein the second
4 program segment is a non-regional news program segment.

1 46. The device of claim 39, wherein the second program
2 segment is a regional advertising segment.

1 47. The device of claim 46, wherein the first program
2 segment is a television program segment.

1 48. A system for presenting a program to an individual,
2 comprising the steps of:

3 a server for broadcasting to the premises of
4 multiple individuals, in a time staggered manner, copies of
5 the program and information about the time and channel upon
6 which copies of the program will be broadcast;

7 a user device in communication with said server,
8 the user device including:

9 means for recording a broadcast of an
10 initial portion of the program;

11 means for receiving information about
12 the time and channel upon which copies of the
13 program are broadcast;

14 means for detecting a request from a
15 user to view said program;

1 49. A system for providing regional and non-regional news
2 to a plurality of users, the system comprising:
3 a server for broadcasting a plurality of regional
4 news segments, non-regional news segments and program
5 information indicating the news segments included in each
6 of a plurality of non-regional news segments;
7 a plurality of user devices in communication with
8 said server, at least some of the user devices being
9 located at different subscriber premises which are
10 physically remote from each other and the server;
11 each of the plurality of said user devices
12 including:
13 a cache for storing regional news segments;
14 means for accessing the broadcast program segment
15 information to identify regional and non-regional news
16 segments which are included in a non-regional news program;
17 means for presenting at least one regional news
18 program by outputting at least one cached regional news
19 segment and by outputting, immediately following the output
20 regional news segment, at least one non-regional news
21 segment corresponding included in the same regional news
22 program as the output non-regional news segment.